

Message Text

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ACTION INR-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SP-02 ICA-11 AID-05 EB-08
NSC-05 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-07 OMB-01 CEA-01 AGR-01
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R 081345Z AUG 78
FM AMEMBASSY WARSAW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6644
INFO AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMCONSUL KRAKOW POUCH
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMCONSUL POZNAN POUCH
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
USMISSION USNATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L WARSAW 6789

EO 11652GDS
TAGS: EPAP, PINT, EAGR, PL
SUBJ: MEAT SHORTAGES CONTINUE IN THE PROVINCES; NETWORK OF
"COMMERCIAL STORES" BEING EXPANDED

REF: A. WARSAW 6122, B. WARSAW 4660, C. STATE 189594

1. A RECENT REPORT FROM POZNAN DESCRIBES SHORTAGES OF MEAT
AND OTHER CONSUMER ITEMS THERE AND ALSO REPORTS THAT MEAT
SHORTAGES ARE BECOMING CHRONIC IN TORUN AND IN KOLOBRZEG.
IN WARSAW, ACCORDING TO SEVERAL DIFFERENT SOURCES, SUPPLIES
AND QUALITY OF MEAT IN THE "COMMERCIAL" SHOPS HAVE RECENTLY
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BEEN GOOD. ON THE OTHER HAND, PEOPLE ARE NOT EVEN
BOTHERING TO FORM LINES IN FRONT OF SOME REGULAR MEAT
STORES WHICH PROBABLY MEANS THERE IS LITTLE WORTH BUY-
ING IN THEM. BY CONTRAST, WARSAW SUFFERED MEAT SHORT-
AGES FOR MOST OF JULY, WITH LONG LINES IN FRONT OF BOTH
REGULAR AND "COMMERCIAL" MEAT SHOPS.

2. THE OFFICIAL EXPLANATION OF THE STATUS OF MEAT SUPPLIES WAS PROVIDED BY ADAM KOWALIK, MINISTER OF DOMESTIC COMMERCE AND SERVICES, IN AN INTERVIEW IN TRYBUNA LUDU ON AUGUST 4. ACKNOWLEDGING THE SHORTAGES, KOWALIK ATTRIBUTED THEM TO RAPIDLY RISING PERSONAL INCOMES AND ESTIMATED THAT 300 TO 400 THOUSAND TONS OF MEAT WOULD BE REQUIRED, IN ADDITION TO THE 1,930 THOUSAND TONS NOW SUPPLIED ANNUALLY, TO "STABILIZE THE MARKET FOR MEAT". HE ALSO EXPLAINED THAT THE NEW NETWORK OF "COMMERCIAL" MEAT STORES WHICH NOW CONSISTS OF ABOUT 100 STORES IN LARGER CITIES WILL BE EXPANDED TO 450 STORES IF THEY ARE ACCEPTED BY THE PUBLIC. THESE STORES SELL ONLY THE HIGHER QUALITY CUTS OF MEAT AT "SUITABLY HIGHER" PRICES (ABOUT DOUBLE) THAN THAT CHARGED BY THE REGULAR STORES.

3. COMMENT: THE EXPANSION OF THE "COMMERCIAL" MEAT STORE

NETWORK TENDS TO CONFIRM EARLIER INDICATIONS THAT THE GOP INTENDS TO GRADUALLY REPLACE THE PRESENT NETWORK OF REGULAR MEAT STORES WITH THE NEW "COMMERCIAL" NETWORK. INCREASE FOR THE BETTER QUALITY CUTS.

4. POLISH AUTHORITIES OF COURSE HOPE THE PRICE INCREASE WILL HAVE THE EFFECT OF INCREASING SUPPLIES IN THE SHOPS SINCE THE DEMAND AT THE HIGHER PRICES PRESUMABLY WOULD INCREASE

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BE SOMEWHAT LOWER. IN VIEW OF THE GREAT AMOUNT OF MONEY IN CIRCULATION AND THE SEEMINGLY INSATIABLE DEMAND OF THE CONSUMER FOR MORE MEAT, THE INCREASED PRICES ARE UNLIKELY TO HAVE THE DESIRED EFFECT. END COMMENT. SCHAUFEL

THIS WOULD CONSTITUTE A DE-FACTO GENERAL MEAT PRICE IN-

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